

hoped that we could get an 8-to-7 or 7-to-6 ratio, or at minimum 6 to 5 to accommodate members of the Finance Committee who are on the subcommittee of jurisdiction and who have put a lot of work into this. I have even tried to say: OK, maybe we can make it work at 5 to 4, but we have not been able to get that worked out.

I think for the Senate to be limited to only five conferees on a bill of this magnitude and as complicated as this is, and as many people who worked so hard on it, that it would not be an acceptable arrangement at this time. So I have to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection has been heard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am disappointed, but I certainly understand.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— H.R. 7

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at a time to be determined by the majority leader, after consultation with the Republican leader, and prior to the August recess, the Senate proceed to the consideration of H.R. 7, the charitable deductions bill, as reported by the Finance Committee, and that it be considered under the following limitation: That there be 4 hours for debate on the bill equally divided between the chairman and ranking member of the Finance Committee; that there be one substitute amendment in order to be offered by the majority leader or his designee; that the debate time shall come from the time on the bill; that upon the disposition of the substitute amendment and the use or yielding back of time, the bill be read a third time and the Senate vote on final passage of the bill, without any intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. LOTT. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, this bill has not been filed and the amendment mentioned is a brandnew amendment which was received at 3:10 p.m. today. I really do not have any idea what is contained in this complete substitute, but I do know we would be unable to clear it for consent at this time. We are working right now to get in touch with Senator GRASSLEY and others to make sure they are familiar with this and have had a chance to look over the substitute amendment to make sure there is no problem with it.

I had hoped we had been able to clear this earlier today, and I hope that if we are not going out of session right away, we might even have a chance to come back, if I can get this cleared, later this afternoon. But until I can do a hotline on it and check with the senior member on the Finance Committee about the substitute amendment, I have to object at this time. I emphasize, I think maybe we can clear it be-

fore the afternoon is done. I hope we can come back to it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection has been heard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I say to my friend, the distinguished Republican leader, Senator DASCHLE will be here tomorrow and maybe even tomorrow something can be worked out. My understanding is the President wants this badly, and I hope we can work it out.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 1140

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 210, S. 1140; that the bill be read a third time and passed; that the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. LOTT. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I have to say, I have no objection to this legislation. In fact, I am a cosponsor of this legislation. It has been discussed and considered for quite some time now, and with the overwhelming support it has, it should move forward.

However, on behalf of a Senator on my side of the aisle who is now in the Judiciary Committee in a meeting and could not be here at this particular time, I am going to have to object on his behalf, but I do want to say this: I do not agree. I believe this is legislation we should pass, and this is the last time I am going to have anybody on this side of the aisle object on this issue. Any Senator who has further objection is going to have to do it himself. As a courtesy to a Senator who is currently tied up, I do object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection has been heard.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I am truly disappointed. People from Nevada and all over the country need this legislation. As the majority leader said, we should work out some way to move this forward. It is too bad one Senator is holding this up.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— S. 1991

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the majority leader, following consultation with the Republican leader, may proceed to the consideration of Calendar No. 404, S. 1991, the Amtrak authorization bill, at a time to be determined.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, again reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Republican leader.

Mr. LOTT. This is legislation we need to consider. It needs to be considered in

the full light of day with amendments in order. We did have a full consideration of the bill in the Commerce Committee with amendments offered. Some were adopted and some were rejected. I voted for the legislation.

We need to move forward on the reform of Amtrak. We are in the process of putting additional money in Amtrak right now, and I support both the loan the administration is working out and perhaps additional money in the supplemental.

Having said that, I do note also that we have to make tough choices. Do we want a national rail passenger system or not? If we do, we have to figure out what kind of reforms we can put in place that will save money or provide additional money; what lines are we going to keep open and keep running or not; if and how much we are going to have to pay for it.

If the American people, through their Representatives and Senators, do not want to vote for additional funds, then that is one choice. I spoke passionately on the floor in 1997 when we passed Amtrak reform legislation. I made a commitment on this floor and to the American people that I supported this because I thought it could become self-supporting. I was wrong. I have to admit that. Now the question is, Do we want to continue to have Amtrak or not? I think we should. I still think it is an important mode of transportation we should not sacrifice. But the Congress is going to have to come to terms with reform.

There are some Senators who object to moving to it at this time. I believe specifically Senator MCCAIN has indicated he has an objection to it. So while I do not agree with the objection, I do agree that the timing is such that we would not be able to give it full and appropriate consideration, in view of other issues to which we have already agreed to go. Therefore, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection has been heard.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST— EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. LOTT. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to executive session for consideration of the following nominations on the calendar: Nos. 810, 825 through 828, 840, 862 through 867, 887 through 889; I further ask that the nominations be confirmed, en bloc; that the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table; that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action; and that the Senate then resume legislative session.

Before the Chair rules, I wish to indicate this request is with respect to 15 judicial nominations, some of which have been on the calendar since May 2. These are nominations that are pending in the Senate, not in the Judiciary Committee. They are ready for consideration by the entire Senate with only one exception; I know of no objections.